

THE SONG OF SONGS.

"There allus bees that name in them cases," suggested Miner, smiling.
"This wan't no case." He never knew only that the work was done, but I did—the miner's face saddened—"an' I sold out as good a teaming business as you ever see."
"Count o' poplar sentiment, I suppose?"
"Now there's queer things in a man's life; an' if I've stayed I'd a killed her husband, an' that would a bin no way to git her affection; an' wouldn't a looked fair? There's my morals. She was his wife an' a good woman. I sold out the bus at a dead loss," with a sigh: "an' just whilst her time o' day an' run off like a coward. I started up here for ten years, an' I wasn't pleased with myself neither when a fellow from Fairplay told me he'd heered she an' him was awful poor, an' she was the worst abused woman he ever see."

It was quite dark in the little shop now, and Miner lit his lamp, leaning low to his bench to see in the light. A lean cat came purring out of a corner, and the miner tilted back his chair.

"An' me, with all my money, can't make that poor little soul comfortable," he sighed.

There was a sound of quick footsteps down at the heel, then the latch clicked.

"Ain't done, Nelly," called the old man. "I'll wait an' finish 'em; you're purty far gone."

There was no answer, only a sort of gasp and a smothered exclamation from the minor, who brought his chair down with a groan. The old man looked at them.

"I can't late you two is quainted," he grinned.

Bill had forgotten his one stocking foot, even his own mortality, and she—she put out her hands like a sleep-walker; then, with a low cry, she ran to him and hid her face on his breast. Still he did not touch her as she clung to him, weeping passionately.

"Nelly!" he cried, with a sob; and she—she put out her hands like a sleep-walker; then, with a low cry, she ran to him and hid her face on his breast. Still he did not touch her as she clung to him, weeping passionately.

"It ain't right," he muttered hoarsely.

"I need never think you be as you is now till it were. You an' me has seen camp,

an' knows what wrong love is."

She only clung closer, such a childlike thing, in her shabby black gown, with her short little curly hair, and her tiny hand clutching his arm.

"Tell you," he cried, passionately.

"Once my arms meet around you, I shall never let you go."

"Well, you needn't," said Miner, dryly;

but there were tears in his old eyes.

"You needn't, Bill—she's a widow."

"It's only since this mornin'," he continued, as the big arms inclosed the tiny figure, "but it's proper, I calc'late. She'd run away from him, but he tricked her, she was so weak, when we eaten supper, an' Jane have the tempt at him. When we won't no use, he took Nelly an' her savin', and was just goin' to leave town after losin' all she live in dragon town, when the old man interdicted him. I calc'late that Bill is too much havin' fun a comin' in can't face that crowd. I know a mem' in that show for his widow to wear to the funeral."

"I knowed no woman but her could wear 'em," cried Bill, looking the rice shore.

"An' it shall be set in gold outer my mine."

"It's a mile too big," she said, very blushing and shy, "an' is so hard."

"Never heared a woman but sed them very words," grinned Miner, beaming on them. "Now, Bill, you're done, an' I'll give you a patch on that one, Nelly, for you don't wanter in a friend's round in new town, or in the funeral, like you was too glad to sit him planted."

"I knowed no woman but her could wear 'em," cried Bill, looking the rice shore.

"An' it shall be set in gold outer my mine."

"The Lord made 'em so."

"Probably. An' this now (turning the shoe over in his big hand) "is a gal, a not a groved woman?"

"All of twenty-eight; quite a year about that, too. Three years ago I was a settin' here, between day an' dark, when my dox hounds open an' run.

What I took to be a gal, but afterward see was a little mite of a groved woman, with bright birdlike eyes and curly hair.

"Then miners is a-follerin' me, the eries drops inter their cheer, an' faints dead away."

"Gosh, this very cheap!" echoed Bill, in an awe-stricken tone.

"Same—set right there. I opens the door," says, "I've got the drop-on ye, an' it's a darn shame to act like that, an'—git, which they done, an' I went back an' give her whisky, an' she come to an' just kitched my hand up an' kissed it."

"Lord!" cried the miner.

"An' it wasn't over I mean, fur mindin' isn't over perilliferous work. Well, she

hadn't no friends, an' was come here to settle, an' hein' went in' mysterious. I took her home to sitter Jane. "Peculiar to me," she said to Jane, "all the troubles of my life is caused by men."

"They be emmery," said the miner, sympathetically.

"We left her a week, an' then she

went to work sewin', an' incited on

psalms her heart, an' made Jane the trimmest gown an' caps, and me a dressin' gown like I was a female. I went it to please her, but I tellas feels I looks like one of them old patriarchs fat."

We never asked her history, but Jane

said she was bruised from Iowan, an' we

she trained her pretty curls over a source

healed over on her forehead. I calc'lated

she was one of them thoroughbreds what

will stan' eny amount of drivin', but

it's a smash an' a runaway if you hit 'em."

"There's some men as ought to be shot

on sight," muttered the miner. "An' that shoe was her!"

"Yeah, an' I've got to hear her for so

much that I've almosht glad I was here

stid' er Caleb; he wain't never neiborly.

"When I come here I says, 'I'll

give ya fifteen dollars fur the place,

Says he, 'Take it fur fourteen an' a half.'

"Why? says? Did you, say he, ever

know a man who became a sewer, but

Wat look at me! Dey erands an'

has breath erand ter git up ther' kind

comes to an' tel to me, ev'ry human

who the walls singgur an' venta his

remained remure on me, an' ev'ry

sun bunched or sunnah beamed female

women comes to tell me in' trouble

with the old man of the land."

"Wat," I says, "I'se comin' to you,

hats 'em, growls he, 'What where you going, not you? You're the kind as tel

about a gal you loved, named Lillie, who died fifty years ago. Wat I going to

be a sheep herder, when I want me one

of human kind fur months on a stretch,

an' whose I can go infected this year round?" So he goes an' I stay."

"When I was in Arizona," said the

miner, laying the shoe down, with a

sigh, "I learned to the house of a little

woman as could a worn shoe. The

ritties was awful. Some of the inmates

would a took a blast to open 'em, an' the

pies might a sole them tutes, but she

wain't but a young thing, so her hu-

man wain't the emperat."

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